

PUTIN DEPLOYS WARSHIP ARMED WITH NEW ZIRCON HYPERSONIC CRUISE MISSILES

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Russia claims the Zircon can evade all Western air defense systems by flying at 11,265 kilometers per hour.

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In a highly symbolic move, one that is meant to signal to the collective West that Russia will not be backing down in the ongoing and escalating war in Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin has deployed one of Russia's most modern warships equipped with the new Zircon hypersonic missile on a cruise through the Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, and the Indian Ocean.

"This time the ship is equipped with the latest hypersonic missile system—Zircon," Putin said, adding: "I am sure that such powerful weapons will make it possible to reliably protect Russia from potential external threats and will help ensure the national interests of our country," Russian state media [reported](#).

The weapons aboard the frigate, Putin claimed, have "no analogs in any country in the world."

The Zircon hypersonic missile is a long-range weapon designed to travel at exceptionally high speeds, typically faster than Mach 5, or five times the speed of sound, which makes them notoriously difficult to track and intercept by ground-to-air missile defense systems.

Due to the high speed at which they travel and their maneuverability, intercepting hypersonic cruise missiles is significantly more difficult than intercontinental ballistic missiles. The missile is equipped with guidance systems that allow them to navigate its

target with greater agility.

Russia [claims](#) the Zircon can evade all Western air defense systems by flying at 11,265 kilometers per hour.

According to a [report](#) from CNN, the Russian Federation first tested the Zircon at the end of 2021, firing the missile from a warship in the White Sea, near Finland, and successfully hitting a target over 400 kilometers away.

This present mission, announced by Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu on Wednesday, January 4th, represents the first deployment of the weapon in a potential combat scenario.

"Today, frigate Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union Gorshkov with Tsirkon hypersonic missiles on board is embarking on a long-range sea voyage across the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, as well as the Mediterranean Sea," the minister was [quoted](#) by the Russian News Agency TASS.

"The main efforts during the campaign will be focused on countering Russia's threats, maintaining regional peace, and stability together with friendly countries," he added.